1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

423 lord state, he has the right to grant fields to monasteries or to personal friends, and the right to sell or mortgage parts of the clan territory to Chinese or to monasteries.[40]

426 As an illustration the Li T'u-ssu, in 1906, being in debt, mortgaged a part of his territory near Weiyuanp'u to the Living Buddha Chang-chia [41] of the Chang-chia monastery, a piece of the Li territory in Hsiaoyang-ch'uan and another in Shuimokou, with some adjoining

425 forest. Similarly the Ch'i T'u-ssu of Nienpei sold a part of his territory to the Chinese of Kaochai in 1908. The Lu T'u-ssu, according to the family chronicles, granted land in Niut'oukou to the father-in-law of his nephew and also to one of his secretaries.

The adaptation between this theoretical absolute ownership and the rights of private property of individual members of the clan is effected through an interesting convention: the T'u-ssu never "sells" the soil to farmers; he writes a contract under which he accepts the price of the fields, just as a seller does, but in the contract the word "pass" is used instead of the word "sell." Thus he "passes" his land to be used by the farmer and his heirs in perpetuity, and endows him with the right to "pass" it over to other members of the clan. Under this convention the T'u-ssu, by accepting the price of the land, pledges that he will not interfere with the use or disposal of it.

All interests are thus reconciled and the required stability achieved. The farmer becomes a quasi owner, with all the rights of a real owner. The T'u-ssu gets the selling price of his land but continues to be recognized as the "owner" by the overlord state, and the farmers living in "his" territory remain bound to him, remain his subjects, and liable as such to corvées, to military service, and to taxes.

Often, however, I have heard the Monguors say, heaving a deep sigh, that now-a-days their T'u-ssu love money too much;

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[40] J. Van Oost, *Au pays des Ortos*, 13, Paris, éditions Dillen, 1932, notes that in the Ordos the territory belongs to the tribe but the prince may dispose of it in order to grant a domain to one or another of his subjects, usually an important official. The territory of the tribe may not be sold, but may be rented to Chinese for farming for a time so long that it is practically equivalent to sale.

[41] The Chang-chia (lCan-skya) Hutukhtu is one of the most important Lama Buddhist "incarnations." In the eighteenth century, in the reign of the Manchu Emperor Ch'ien Lung, the incumbent of this incarnation played an important part in the translation into Mongol of Tibetan religious literature, thus furthering the Manchu policy of diverting the attention of the Mongols away from the past and toward the acceptance of religious control. See W. Heissig, *Bolur Erike, Monumenta Serica*, Monograph 10, Peiping, Catholic Univ., 1946, especially pp. 28–30. For this reason the incarnations of the Chang-chia Hutukhtu or Living Buddha were thereafter especially favored by the Manchu dynasty and afterwards by the Chinese Republic. The Chang-chia's influence was greatest in Inner Mongolia, and he also had monasteries at Wut'aishan, a great center of Mongol pilgrimage in Shansi province in North China, in Peking, and in the Monguor country as mentioned in the text above. The present incarnation of the Chang-chia is a refugee on Formosa.—O. L. [p. 59a]

425 they want us to sign contracts, have them registered, and pay taxes. In the good old days, as our tradition goes, all these formalities did not exist; when Monguors wanted to bring into cultivation some non-cultivated land in the clan territory, they took possession of it, and paid the regular taxes according to average. When they "passed" the land to some other member of the clan, they fixed the sum to be paid by mutual agreement. No contract was signed. Instead, the outlines of the field were drawn on a plank; the plank was sawn in two pieces, and each took half of it. Now there are too many astute Chinese enrolled in the clan. We Monguors and the T'u-ssu are not so unsophisticated as before, and every day there are more and more formalities.

425 618 This tradition about taking possession of land within the territory of the clan according to the personal needs of the subject, and naturally without prejudice to the interests of others, is instructive and believable. In the Hsifan (Tibetan) tribe of Sumdoo, near the monastery of Erhkulung, the same procedure still prevailed in 1911–1921. There, every member of the clan was free to bring into cultivation non-cultivated land, and to build a house anywhere in the territory of the clan. The man who did so was bound to notify his taking possession of the soil by offering to the chief of the tribe a quarter of a brick of tea and two packets of Chinese vermicelli; no other formalities or expenses. This tribe was still practising far-more stock-breeding than agriculture, and was probably very much like the Monguors at the time when they were making the transition from cattle-breeding to farming. Among them, if a man wanted to make money by selling land that he had improved, perhaps by building a house or adding an irrigation ditch, they agreed on a sum and drew on a sheet of paper a map of the field and each took his half of the map. There was no other form of contract, no registration, and no tax. It is remarkable that this old custom of the map as deed of sale and title deed prevailed at late as 1911–1921.

423 618 These customs seem to indicate absolute independence and equality as between individual members of the clan in taking possession of community land in order to make a living. It would seem that all the members of the clan agree with each other's fundamental right to make a living, to improve themselves financially, and to do so by whatever means they personally consider adequate or necessary, as long as these means are not prejudicial to the interests of others.

Looking back to what has been said above about the chief of the clan and the way in which he is "chosen" and appointed by the elders, it is plain that the community, represented by the elders, was originally the possessor and dispenser of the clan territory. The supremacy of the chief came late and was a kind of usurpation. We learn from history that at all times usurpers have existed. It is clear that by the time of Chingis Khan the holder of a fief was the real proprietor. The fief was a definite territory granted the fief-holder. Its inhabitants were his vassals and he was the vassal of the emperor. He was the "owner" of both the vassals and the territory,

[p. 596]

583 /47 cont'd/
585 drops, silver rings....It even happens that rich people give their
431 daughter several /48/ arpents of land, which are called ngusge
602 gadiziar (ngusge, "rouge"; gadiziar, "land"), i.e., the land which
[425] procures the girl's rouge, with the condition that the husband must sow it and give the revenue from it to his wife. Thereafter, if the son-in-law's family is ever forced to sell these lands, the first offer will have to be made to the wife's family.

423 About 30 years ago, the Ma family of Na-lin-keou had re-
583 ceived in marriage a girl, Pao, who had received from her parents some "rouge lands." The Ma family became poor and mortaged these lands to the Pen family; later it sold them to the Heou family. The Pens, basing their right on the Chinese axiom, "He who holds a mortgage has prior right of purchase," brought an action against the Mas and demanded the turning over of the lands. But then the Pao family appeared and claimed these lands as being the "rouge lands" given to their aunt at the time of her marriage. The Chinese court recognized this custom and decided in their favor.

This same custom is still found among the Mongols. Recently, the king of Orat of the confederation of Olanish'ah, giving his daughter in marriage to the king of Hang King of the confederation of the Ortos, gave her on this occasion part of the lands of Saimnoor (30 li southwest of the Christendom of San-tao-k'iao, Mission of Ning-Hia).

585 As for the gifts of which I have spoken above, there are
583 numerous variants; I knew a case where the girl was given only six long garments; another where she was given ten; everything depends on the financial situation of the family.

The women in particular are very much interested in the gifts; they examine the fabrics and the finish of the embroideries, especially those on the sleeves and the two ends of the belts. Months and months of work are often put on these pieces. When the examination is finished, the bride is brought in.

She is carried on a small, low Chinese table, which has been covered /49/ previously with red felt. She is put down between the sacred fire and the display of presents. This is her first and only
[302] appearance at this festivity. She is bareheaded and wears the hair style of unmarried girls.

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

chiliarchs still exist in Kumbum, Erh-ku-lung and Seerkok), meting out punishments (instruments of torture are still displayed at lama courts), and imprisonment (the prison of Seerkok still exists); caring for the preservation of peace and order in the territories assigned to them, inquiring about travelers passing through it; administering the distribution of fields, the imposition and collection of taxes, the imposition of tolls on bridges (the bridge of T'ien t'ang and raft of Kan ch'an), and the imposition of corvées. 792 175 692

At the time of the inroads of marauding Mongol and Tibetan tribes, the revolts of Moslems, and the lama revolt against China in 1723, the subjects were compelled by the lamas to take sides with them in combat and in defending the lamaseries and their territories. In short, the privileges bestowed upon the chiefs of the lama institutions before 1723 were far-reaching. They were units, scattered over the country, administering their subjects according to their own rules and customs, entirely free from the interference of Chinese officials.

The lamaseries were the administrative centers of the groups subordinated to them. All the country's wealth flowed into their granaries and treasuries. Moreover, the lamas tended herds of cows, sheep, and horses, built oil and grain mills, and received donations. The lamaseries were the only places where huge sums of money could be borrowed (Li and Ch'i T'u-ssu borrowed money from them by mortgaging parts of their properties). They removed the wealth of the country from circulation and hoarded it or used it to found new lama communities (the tremendous branching out of monasteries between 1600 and 1723). They did not even use it for charitable institutions for the people of the country. 792 175 425 426

The lamaseries, originally built in lonely places and in remote valleys, in order that the monks would not be disturbed in their meditations and studies by the tumult of the world, were in olden times the most animated places of the country. In autumn the subjects carried taxes and rents on long caravans of donkeys to their granaries. The measuring of grain went on, as it did all over Asia, with rumbling noise and cries, bursting with activity for weeks in succession. At the time of exchanging tea for horses all the subjects were interested in the assessment of the horses. The tumult and discussions on the grounds of the monastery lasted for days and days. The selection of the horses for tribute to the emperor was conducted with like tumult and confusion, and often for the same length of time. Two or three times a year large festivals were held at the monasteries. They were attended by all the people of the country interested in horse racing, wrestling, singing, dancing, and in the big fairs held at that time. Chinese traders came from the city, pitched their tents, paid toll to the lamas, and sold their wares. The Monguors and Tibetans also arrived with their hom[illegible]un 792 175 651 427 554 443

[p.49(8)]

4; Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

with silk flags, to look at the hundreds of measures of grain put into the chair, the hundreds of pounds of sugar and raisins, the hundreds of rich garments, and the herd of sheep which follows the chair (for the few pieces of meat are called a "herd of sheep"), and so on, for the other items. They implore it to look at the unusual prodigality of the customer, who is a fervent adherent of the faith. After the parody is played, the lamas have a good time visiting the neighbors. On the seventh day, at night, all the neighbors help escort the troublesome spirit outside the village, forming an imposing cortege with banners flying and drums, horns, and some rifles, and carrying the sedan chair, the caldron and bull head, the spears and swords. The lamas blow the trumpets made from a human femur. The bull head, spears, and swords are buried in a deep hole; a big fire is lit and the pit is filled, at full speed, flush with the ground. The stake is thrust into it; the whole group howls and curses the avenger, rifles are fired, trumpets blown, and the lamas return. The sedan chair is emptied by the neighbors. Restitution is thus made, the avenging spirit is appeased and thrust into the hole, and the thief remains possessor of his thievery.

A rich man, Lo san lao, who lived in Ha-la-chih Valley, had succeeded in bringing to his home the fine young lady of the poor Monguor Li sse of Naring Valley. Calamities then troubled his family, and he invited Yellow lamas to perform the rite. They placed in the sedan chair a fine paper lady. The rite of the caldron and bull head was carried out, and the avenging spirit was thrust into the hole. Restitution was thus made by means of a paper lady, but he remained the possessor of the real one.

After many years this rite as performed by Red lamas, invited by the famous Sumpa Hutukhtu in order to compensate for the injustices perpetrated by his intendants, is still talked about in the country. The splendid sedan chair was on this occasion lavishly filled with precious items. A beautiful horse which followed the cortege was abandoned for the neighbors. After the bull head had been buried and the avenging spirit thrust into the hole, hundreds of people had tried to capture the horse.

The claims of justice are deeply embedded in the consciousness of the people, and the necessity of restitution for injustices is always advocated by the lamas, although the magical rite of restitution seems to be a mockery of its real intent. Justice seems to rank first among the virtues.

In connection with this peculiar mentality concerning the spirit who is the avenger of injustices is to be noted the cult of the Sturlong spirit. This spirit is supposed to guard the wealth of the family with ruthless severity. It does not allow anything of value belonging to the family which honors it to be taken away. It is honored as a family deity, mostly among the Monguors of the

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

Seerting group, but also among some families living in the Hung-nai and Ha-la-chih Valleys. It is said that long ago an old lama of Sung-chan-i (P'ing-fan hsien) introduced the cult of this spirit in the country. It has only one eye in front, and its image is honored not in the living room but behind the entrance gate of the courtyard. Many Monguors do not like to marry their daughters into families where this spirit is honored, and those who honor it are afraid to get rid of its cult, for fear of calamities. The spirit notices all visitors and watches to see whether some evil intent is not lurking behind the visit. It is said that when an undesired guest lingers waiting for dinner, Sturlong causes him tremendous intestinal troubles so that he has to run away. At the time when the dowry for a girl of the family is discussed, and the head of the family suggests that the part required by the lord of the family is not yet fixed, the go-betweens understand the hint and promise a goat for Sturlong. On the wedding day, a few moments before the bride will leave, a goat is set before Sturlong who avidly devours its prey and does not notice the bride leaving. At the time an animal is to be sold, its price is discussed not at the home of the proprietor but outside the courtyard, in order to avoid Sturlong knowing about it.

Still another spirit is honored, which steals in behalf of the families that honor it. Its cult is practiced especially in the Hung nai Valley. The Chinese call it *Mao-kui-shen* "cat spirit." It is a male spirit for which young women prepare a blanket at night, and which they "serve." On the tenth moon it steals grain and brings it to the granaries of its devotees. If guests arrive unexpectedly at noon and the food prepared is not sufficient, it is so potent that it can add food enough for all the guests by unknown means. When thieves come at night, it spirits away the things they intend to steal. However, it cannot steal Chinese coins, because Chinese characters are stamped on them; it cannot steal cloth in behalf of its devotees, because on both ends of a piece of cloth are printed the brands of the fabric. It cannot take things out of a closet which is tightly closed, but when the door is open it takes what it needs. It likes to drink liquor. A young woman poured liquor for it, one cup after another, until the cup remained full. In the blanket she found a drunken cat, which her husband killed. These tales resemble those recounted by the Mongols, concerning the well-known fox-spirit.[12]

[12] Here should be noted the very interesting study of F. A. Oberle, S.V.D., dealing with a similar frame of mind, with practices, some similar and some differing, encountered among the Tibetans of the region of Kui-te, 200 *li* south of Hsining on the right bank of the Yellow River, and among a group of Tibetans living 60 *li* west of Hsining called Chia-hsi-fan by the Chinese, i.e., Tibetans living in houses in contrast to the Tibetans living in tents. However, I never heard the Monguors explaining the rites performed against the avenger of the family wealth, suggesting the avenger having the appearance of a "Hundekopfdamon," an evil spirit with a dog head. See

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